

Research Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monterey Bay Aquarium Ocean View conference Room

April 22, 1994 - 0830 to 1200 hrs

Minutes taken and transcribed by:

Aaron King, Monterey Bay NMS - RAC Executive Coordinator

Member Attendees

Greg Cailliet, Moss Landing Marine Labs - RAC Chairman
Andrew DeVogelaere, ESNERR and Foundation
Laura Ehret, Naval Postgraduate School
Steve Eittreim, USGS (Representing Gary Greene of the USGS)
Les Strnad, CA Coastal Commission
Roger Phillips, MBA (Representing Chris Harrold)
Jim Harvey, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Deborah Johnston, CA Dept of Fish and Game/Monterey
Dennis Powers, Hopkins Marine Station
Bruce Robison, MBARI
Jan Roletto, GFNMS
Bill Schramm, NOAA/OAB
Gary Sharp, CIRIOS
Rick Starr, UC Sea Grant Advisory Program
Mark Stephenson, CDFG/Marine Pollution Studies Lab
Mary Yoklavich, NOAA/NMFS/PFEG

Guest Attendees

Donna Meyers - AMBAG
Rachel Saunders - CMC
Francisco Chavez - MBARI
Bob Geyer - City of Watsonville

Members Not In Attendance

Terry Jackson, Manager, Monterey Bay NMS
Jim Rote, NOAA/OCRM

Greg Cailliet, RAC Chair, introduced the meeting.

Quick discussion items:

Approval of March 25, 1994 Meeting Minutes (Cailliet) -

Andrew DeVogelaere asked that the minutes correctly emphasize his concern that the purpose behind any Sanctuary permits be more accurately described, and that the role of the RAC in reviewing permit requests be analyzed and described. The minutes were then unanimously approved.

RAC Membership (King) - A letter was sent from the MBNMS Manager and the RAC Chair inviting the Department of the Interior to nominate a representative to the RAC. It was reported by Aaron that no appointment had yet been

made. Also, the Morro Bay Foundation had requested that new information be sent to them (old minutes, etc.) before they appoint a representative.

Site Characterization RFP (King) - E-mail message sent from Helen Golde describing four changes that had been made to the RFP since the RAC had last seen it. They were: 1) who will be allowed to apply, 2) there must be discrete product created for the grant award made, 3) the Gray's Reef NMS Site Characterization RFP will be combined with the MBNMS's, and 4) the references in the FR notice as to what should be contained in the Site Characterization have been removed and will be replaced by info in Application Kits to be distributed by the staff. The RFP should be out by May 2.

RAC Role (Harvey/DeVogelaere) - Jim and Andrew emphasized that a large amount of time must be set aside, either at this meeting or the next, on the role of the RAC and its relationship to the SAC. The Chair asked, and it was agreed, that the RAC should try and get through the present Agenda and then turn whatever time was left to this discussion.

Progress Reports:

OSSPRE (Robison) - Bruce reported that 10 years ago the NSF came up with its first long-range ocean plan. They are presently (over the past two years) updating this plan. The Ocean Sciences Strategic Plan for Research and Education (OSSPRE) is a polling report of the scientific community of what they believe should be in the revised NSF long-range plan. They now have a draft. An opportunity now exists for the RAC to comment on this report. One point that has been raised in the report is the fact that there appears to be a backlash against the typical way that NSF funds mega-projects. There was a feeling that there should be more, smaller programs. Bruce then went on to discuss several areas of research that show promise and need for research concentrations, such as global climate change, Antarctic, Near-coastal, biodiversity, integrated reef systems, etc. There is also a concentration of research needs on the technology that makes ocean research possible. There is a feeling that the education section of the report is the weakest, and needs the most work. Comments on this document need to be made within the next two months. A subcommittee was formed with Don Potts (Chair), and including Les Strnad, Andrew DeVogelaere, and a representative from the EAC would be requested to participate. Bruce would participate as an aide to the subcommittee. Aaron will ensure that everyone has the document.

A comment was made that the RAC should also be reviewing, and possibly commenting on, NOAA's strategic plan. (Note: Aaron will try and find out where this stands in its review process, and report back to the RAC.) **Permit Subcommittee Report (Strnad)** - Les made note of the memo from Helen Golde that was passed out. While there is a plan to use Moss Landing Marine Labs as a pilot study for creating institutional permits, Helen has not been able to put together a draft "Process Document" due to the ATOC issue. Projected date that this will be ready is in two weeks. Helen and Charlie Wahle will be out here during the week of May 16 20, and will meet with the subcommittee after they have had a chance to review the document. Some discussion ensued on the issue of the RAC review of permit requests that come through the Sanctuary office. Rachel Saunders stated that both the CAC and the EAC are also interested in participating in creation of a framework for reviewing pending permit requests. Rachel volunteered to work with the permit subcommittee on this.

Report by the Chair on the March 30, 1994, SAC Meeting -

Greg summarized the course of the day at the SAC meeting. While no policy actions were taken at this meeting (it was an organizational meeting mostly) Greg took an opportunity at the meeting to: 1) very strongly emphasize the need for NOAA to hire a new Research Coordinator, 2) state that a need exists for more research funding within the confines of the Sanctuary, 3) state the RAC's desire for official recognition by the SAC, and 4) summarize the RAC's actions and accomplishments to date. A discussion ensued as to how the RAC and the SAC can interact. Two paths were seen: 1) that the SAC may direct the RAC to investigate issues, and 2) that the RAC may send research issues to the SAC that it believes need discussion and/or action by the SAC. Rachel Saunders suggested that the three committees should try and interact more. It was also suggested that the RAC not lose sight of the fact that it also deals with a lot of important issues that are of no concern to the SAC.

Coastal Ocean Program (DeVogelaere) - Andrew explained how he and several other researchers have sent in an 10 to 15 page planning letter for a proposal to study how non-point source pollution, pesticides and loss of wetland in the upper watershed are affecting the wetlands and the Bay. The request is for \$500,000. Also, Andrew announced that Jane Caffrey of the USGS has just received funding through the ESNERR system to study nutrient cycling within Elkhorn Slough. Approval has also been given for a second year of study by UCSC Ag-Ecology program and the Elkhorn Slough Foundation to look at how different farming techniques influence pocket marshes. Another aspect of this is to set up a demonstration farm for local farmers to learn more environmentally friendly ways to do research around wetlands. Another proposal has been submitted to the UC Toxics program, in conjunction with Indira Venketesan of UCLA, to study sediments and nutrients in the watershed.

NOS Grants - The Chair pointed out the handout describing two local NOS grants that were just granted. A suggestion was made that the Research Coordinator put together a glossary of acronyms.

US EPA Near Coastal Waters Program (Strnad) -Les described a project by the US EPA to Develop a strategic plan for monitoring water quality and sediments (historical 2 decades) using Elkhorn Slough watershed as a pilot project.

This is part of the 1990 amendments to the Coastal Zone Management Act to develop a strategy for control of non-point source water pollution: trying to identify key problems with the way agencies collect samples, reference study sites, etc. This work will be incorporated into the State strategy for water pollution control.

ICM - ICM was on the Agenda but not discussed.

GIS (DeVogelaere) - Andrew mentioned that the Elkhorn Slough GIS is progressing and that vegetation is being mapped. In addition, Rikk Kvitek and the Calif. Coastal Commission are working on other images of Elkhorn Slough.

Volunteer Programs (Cailliet) - Greg made mention of the Beachwalk Program (Esta Lee Albright), for which the organizers have asked the RAC to review their datasheets, etc. What does the RAC want to do with these requests? Jim Harvey suggests that the RAC can act as conduit for getting researchers who want to get involved. For example, the RAC could let it be known to the Research Community that the Beachwalk Program exists and that there is a desire to have a researcher get involved. There was some talk about how, someday, the Sanctuary would take a role in keeping track of all the various databases that exist. There ensued a discussion about the future role of a MBNMS Research Coordinator.

Permits (King) - Aaron passed out a short review of what permits are pending. Special mention and discussion was made of the Lockheed request to do some hydrophone calibrations near Santa Cruz by generating sound levels. It was generally agreed by the group that such a report by the Sanctuary would be helpful at each meeting. Les suggested that the listing also contain a field for a date when the permit was request, standard geographic location coordination, what regulation the activity would violate, and, if already issued, an issue date.

Discussion Items

National Marine Sanctuaries Non-Profit Foundations

(Saunders) - Rachel described the ongoing cooperative agreement, for which the Center for Marine Conservation received a grant from National Marine Sanctuary Program, to establish a Sanctuary Program Foundation for which their would be separate sections. The idea at this point is to make the Pier One Learning Center project a pilot study for a Sanctuary Foundation. What is presently in the works is the completion of a feasibility and options study, and the hiring of a Foundation non-profit organizer. An appeal from the RAC was made to ensure that the Foundation be focused on research as well as education. Mention was made by Aaron of the latest amendments to the Sanctuaries Act that allows for the creation of Sanctuary emblems and the selling of the rights to be a Sanctuary sponsor.

Jade Cove (Cailliet/Eittreim) - In preparation of the upcoming SAC meeting, the Chair asked for a briefing by the USGS representative, and a discussion by the RAC, of the scientific knowledge surrounding Jade Cove. Steve

described the Jade deposit there as being a metamorphic mineral from the Franciscan formation that drops out of the cliffs and falls into the water. Discussion centered on the level of extraction, as to whether or not it was a full scale commercial operation, or was done by individuals by hand. Unless the SAC is interested in getting information on how fast this mineral feeds into the Sanctuary, or information on where the mineral comes from, there was a feeling that this is generally a policy issue and not one that the RAC should be concerned with. Steve gave Greg a name of a USGS scientist that the SAC could get further information from regarding what is known about the Jade Cove deposits (Gretchen Luepke). A final concern was that most of what is collected is not Jade, but is serpentine.

Watsonville Wastewater Treatment Facility (Geyer) - Bob explained to the RAC the legal, financial and bureaucratic problems the City of Watsonville has been struggling with in order to upgrade its wastewater treatment facility. A handout was given with details (attached). Watsonville would be grateful for any help that the RAC and the SAC could give in helping leverage the money that has been promised to the City for this effort. There was an agreement by the RAC that issues that affect the quality of the Sanctuary's water are important to the research community, and that the Chair would support Watsonville's request to the State at the next SAC meeting.

ATOC (Cailliet/Harvey) - Greg announced that the RAC has received an official request from Francesca Cava to look into and give her their advice on the issues surrounding ATOC (written request attached). Jim stated that the subcommittee will have put together a short summary of what is going on with ATOC with regard to the physics, the environment and the regulatory requirements surrounding ATOC. This would be used by the RAC at the next meeting as a discussion item. Greg made mention of the fact that the depth of the request and the time scale given for completion (two weeks) was unrealistic. He communicated this to NOAA and was told that whatever could be done would be appreciated. It was also agreed that the RAC would be better utilized if it was to simply review the scope of the DEIS, and the content of the final EIS that was being unofficially proposed. Mention was made that ATOC was considering its options with regard to altering the program, giving the marine mammal researchers more control over the project initially, and allowing them to create a more complete initial baseline database.

Les Strnad brought up the issue of the San Lorenzo River and the breaching of the bank into the ocean. This is an issue the RAC may have to get involved with.

At this point, the RAC meeting was adjourned at 11:58 AM.